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NWS11aug-4. New Surface Warfare video feature debuts

By Lt. Cmdr. Irene Smith, N86 Public Affairs (director, surface warfare)

WASHINGTON (NWS) -- The Surface Warfare Officer (SWO) community had debuted a new video production that has recently become the centerpiece of surface warfare recruiting and retention efforts. Only thing is, it was a second class petty officer that put it together.

Working on a shoestring budget of a thousand dollars, a resourceful 2nd class petty officer has created a new surface warfare video production. The theme of the piece is "Surface Warfare—We Build Leaders." The film highlights what surface warfare has to offer; a sense of community, proud tradition/heritage, adventure, travel, skills for life, applied experience and leadership.

Using computer rendering and generation techniques, the creator, IT2 Kenneth G. Walton, accomplished this by taking some footage from older Navy Imaging Command and Navy Media Center films and combined it with footage of his ship, USS David R. Ray (DD 971).

The feature is a collage of images of Navy people in action. The resulting video feature had so impressed a New York City advertising agency that they estimated the video's production cost to be more than \$100,000.

"Technically speaking, it's a professional quality production that you wouldn't expect an individual to do," said Cmdr. Hank Miranda, the project's producer and N86 Junior Officer Retention action officer. "Walton even created the video's accompanying music himself!"

The idea for the video feature originated at the Surface Warfare Commanders Conference in August 1999 when the Rear Adm. Mike Mullen, director of surface warfare, viewed a two-minute commercial for well-known computer Software Company. Seizing on the idea of the video as a vehicle to change the surface warfare image, Mullen pushed to have a surface warfare video produced. But when estimates for a commercial production of a surface warfare video in a similar style came in between \$50,000 to \$100,000 the chances for the film to be made faded.

Walton volunteered to develop the video feature at the request of his former commanding officer, Cmdr. Cliff Perkins. He read in a Navy Times article about the need for a video that would recruit and retain junior officers while at the same time, improving the image of surface warfare. Coordination of the video production was done entirely on e-mails and phone conversations.

The Navy's cost came to about a \$1,000, according to Miranda, the SWO video coordinator. The last time a promotional video was done for the Surface Warfare community was in 1978. "The SWO video tells our future, what the surface Navy is all about," said Miranda.

The SWO video feature has also received unanimous approval from the Chief of Naval Operations, Adm. Vern Clark as well as the two surface warfare type commanders, Vice Adm. Ed Moore and then-Vice Adm. Hank Giffin.

The SWO video feature had its east coast premier at the Surface Navy Association's Dining Out. It was first shown at the Surface Force, Pacific Fleet ball on July 21 to an audience of more than 700.

In recognition and reward for Walton's efforts, the Surface Navy Association flew him and his wife from San Diego to Washington D.C. to be the guests of honor at the dinner. There, Mullen presented Walton with a check for \$7,500 through the military cash award/beneficial suggestion program. This particular program awards money for beneficial suggestions, products or process improvements that directly improve the Navy and saves money. Mullen, as director of surface warfare was authorized to grant awards up to \$7,500.

The video feature will be distributed to the Navy Recruiting Command, Naval Academy, as well as various Navy Reserve Officer Training Corps units throughout the country.

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